

### Patterns of discrimination, grievances and political activity among Europe's Roma: a cross-sectional analysis

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**Patterns of Discrimination, Grievances and Political Activity  
Among Europe's Roma: A Cross-Sectional Analysis**

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# **Patterns of Discrimination, Grievances and Political Activity Among Europe's Roma: A Cross-Sectional Analysis**

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The purpose of this study is to analyse in a large-n cross-sectional format the patterns of discrimination, grievances, and political activity among European Roma (Gypsies) using data from the *Minorities at Risk* project. The model tested here is a two-step model positing that discrimination leads to grievance formation which in turn leads to protest and rebellion. The results show that the Roma, in general, conform to this model but differ in some important specifics.

## **I. Introduction**

The Roma have historically been and continue to be one of the most discriminated against minorities in Eastern and Western Europe. While the Roma are better known as Gypsies, this term is in this author's view pejorative and is therefore not used here. In fact the term Gypsy is actually derived from the word Egypt because it was believed, in error, that the Roma originated in Egypt. In fact, it is believed that they originated in what is now India and arrived in Europe during the Middle Ages. This discrimination has been documented by human rights reports and by scholars (see for example the yearly US State Department *Human Rights Reports* for 1993 through 2000 inclusive; see also for example Barany 1992, 1994 & 1998; Crowe 1994; Crowe and Kolsti 1991; and Lanham 1999). However, no large-n cross-sectional studies have been performed on the subject, to this author's knowledge. This article is intended to provide an empirical analysis of the patterns of discrimination against the Roma as well as of Roma political activity using data from the *Minorities at Risk* dataset. These results are then compared to the results of the general analysis of ethnic conflict of the *Minorities at Risk* project, the dataset and project of which is outlined later in this work.

### **a. Overview of Discrimination Against the Roma**

This analysis of discrimination against Roma is based on the *Minorities at Risk* Reports on the Roma which can be found at [www.bsos.umd.edu/cidcm/mar](http://www.bsos.umd.edu/cidcm/mar). The focus of this analysis is not to document the details of discrimination against the Roma but rather to analyse the general patterns of this discrimination as well as the patterns of their political behaviour in a cross-

sectional format. Thus a basic summary of the situation of the Roma in Europe is in order. One of the primary problems the Roma have to face is prejudice. The Roma are generally considered by others to be a dirty, lazy and stupid people who are prone to crime. That they are often active in the black market and prostitution and are disproportionately involved in recorded crimes perpetuates this stereotype. However, the poor economic status of the Roma, which is at least partially due to these prejudices, is to a great extent responsible for this level of engagement in crime. The Roma have all the characteristics of an economic underclass. They tend to have high levels of unemployment, sometimes reaching 80 to 90 per cent. They usually live in poor housing, often dwelling in a ghetto-like environment. They tend to be uneducated, having high levels of illiteracy. They also tend to have disproportionately high birth rates, as well as below average health and life spans. That the Roma tend to engage in disproportionate levels of crime is not surprising given these economic circumstances. Thus, the stereotype is self-perpetuating. Prejudice reinforces the socio-economic circumstances in which the Roma are more likely to engage in criminal activities and it is those very criminal activities which serve as a major part of the justification for further prejudice.

Discrimination against the Roma tends to be worse in Eastern Europe than in Western Europe and includes both governmental and societal discrimination. At its worst, official discrimination in Eastern Europe since World War II has included assimilation campaigns, forced settlement, segregation, police abuse, denial of citizenship and/or the right to vote, denial of the right to use their own language, and discrimination in employment and education. The Roma have been victims of ethnic cleansing campaigns in some of the former states of Yugoslavia as well as of Nazi genocide during World War II. There are also reports that as far back as the 1970s, the Czechoslovakian government was actively supporting sterilization and abortion programmes of Roma women. By 1988, the number of sterilizations reached 2,000 per year. This sterilization which was often achieved through bribes and coercion as well as during abortion and Caesarean procedures without the patient's permission continued until as late as the spring of 1991. The state also had a policy of separating Roma children from their parents. As a historical note, most Roma in Romania were officially considered slaves until the nineteenth century. The few official attempts to rectify the situation have tended to originate with central governments and usually

fail because the efforts are inadequate to the task and/or they have been undermined by local officials.

While discrimination in Western European states tends to be societal, many of these governments have not recognized the Roma as citizens. In fact, according to the 1954 Geneva Convention, they are 'stateless people'. However, the blame for this cannot be wholly placed on Western European governments. This is because as long as the Roma remain nomadic and do not pay taxes (a fundamental condition of citizenship) it is difficult for the state to provide them with the same social benefits – such as education and health care – to which other citizens are entitled.

Even where official discrimination is not a problem, societal discrimination exists. The Roma are discriminated against in the workplace both in their ability to obtain jobs and in relation to the nature of the jobs they do obtain, which tend to be mostly menial and low paying. Owners of many restaurants and shops deny them access. They are also subject to attacks by racist groups such as the skinheads, especially in Eastern Europe. This violence has been especially bad in Romania where there have been numerous reports from rural areas of attacks that include lynchings and burnings of homes of Roma by villagers, often with the help or acquiescence of the local police.

Since the fall of the communist governments in Eastern Europe, the Roma have begun to organize for political action and have been making demands for an improvement in their status. These movements have tended to be very factional and disorganized.

While this summary of Roma status in Europe is by no means complete, it is sufficient to make the point that the Roma suffer from a high level of discrimination. This proposition can be formalized using the following hypothesis:

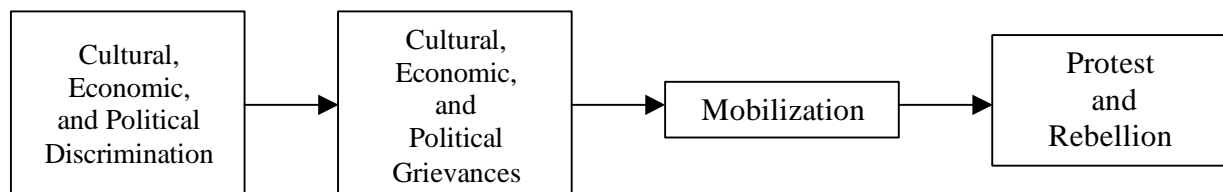
*Hypothesis 1: The Roma of Europe suffer from disproportionate levels of cultural, economic, and political discrimination.*

### **b. The *Minorities at Risk* Project**

The stated purpose of the *Minorities at Risk* project is to collect information on ethnic minorities worldwide deemed to be ‘at risk’ and to use this information to create a dataset on which statistical methods can be used. Minorities are deemed to be ‘at risk’ if they suffer from measurable levels of discrimination, are disadvantaged due to past discrimination, and/or support political organizations, legal or illegal, whose primary purpose is to improve the minority's status. It is hoped that the project will provide a better understanding of the processes which lead to ethnic conflict. It is further hoped that such an understanding will provide decision-makers with a tool for predicting where and when ethnic conflicts are likely to occur and provide these decision-makers with a greater ability to defuse the conflicts before they happen. This paper focuses on achieving this aim with respect to the specific case of the Roma in Eastern and Western Europe.

The units of analysis in the dataset are ethnic minorities within specific countries. Thus, a single ethnic group may be included several times in the dataset, once for each country in which it is an ethnic minority that has been deemed to be ‘at risk’. 275 ethnic minorities which meet the project's criteria have been identified worldwide and included in the Phase 3 dataset, including thirteen Roma minority groups living in Eastern and Western Europe. For a full listing of the European groups that are included in this study see *Table 6* in Appendix A.

**Figure 1: The Basic *Minorities at Risk* Model**



The Phase 1 version of this dataset has been used to develop and statistically test a basic model on the causes of ethnic conflict. The data used here is from Phase 3 of the project, which is current up to 1998. Phase I of the project was current up to 1989 and contained little data on the Roma. Phase 2 has never been completed. This model is illustrated in Figure 1 above. The theoretical basis for the model is as follows. The process which leads to ethnic conflict has three major steps. First, the presence of cultural, economic, and/or political discrimination against an ethnic minority leads to the process of grievance formation within that minority group. Second, groups which have formed grievances are likely to engage in group mobilization for protest and/or rebellion. That is, they will begin to organize themselves in order to be better able to publicly express and address their grievances. Third, groups that have mobilized are likely to engage in protest and/or rebellion. In other words ethnic groups suffering from discrimination are likely to form grievances, organize themselves to do something about those grievances, then put their plans into action. This approach is basically a combination of the relative deprivation approach pioneered by Gurr together with Tilly's group mobilization approach (see Gurr 1970; Tilly 1978; see also Rule 1988 for a further description and criticism of both the relative deprivation and group mobilization approaches).

The original data analysis pointed toward this multi-step model because the statistical relationships between each step were considerably stronger than the direct relationship between discrimination and the final outcomes of protest and rebellion. That is, discrimination has a strong correlation to grievances which in turn are strongly correlated with mobilization which is again in turn strongly correlated with protest and rebellion. However, the direct correlation discrimination has with protest and rebellion is considerably weaker. Thus the mediating variables of grievance formation and group mobilization are important parts of the process that leads to ethnic conflict (for more details see Gurr 1993a; 1993b; 2000; and Gurr and Moore 1997; a simplified version of the *Minorities at Risk* model can be found in Gurr & Harff 1994, 77-96).

This is a simplified version of the model developed in the Phase 1 analysis. The model contains several other variables which are significant in the process of ethnic conflict. Other variables and

relationships important to the project's model include: repressive control, which increases the level of group cohesion identity and decreases the level of mobilization; group cohesion and identity, the level of which is increased by collective disadvantages as well as engagement in communal protest or rebellion, and which increases the likelihood of mobilization and the formation of grievances; and group size and concentration, which increases the level of mobilization.

The project's model also includes several state characteristics and international factors which affect the processes of communal protest and rebellion. These include: international support for the state which increases the level of repressive control; international support for an ethnic group which increases the level of group cohesion and identity; the processes of state expansion and economic development which increase the level of grievances and are positively associated with the level of state power; the levels of state power and institutional democracy which both increase the likelihood that communal action will take the form of protest rather than rebellion; the process of democratization which tends to be destabilizing and accordingly increases the likelihood of both communal protest and rebellion; and the processes of contagion and diffusion which both postulate that the level of communal protest and rebellion by similar groups elsewhere increase the likelihood of communal protest and rebellion at home.

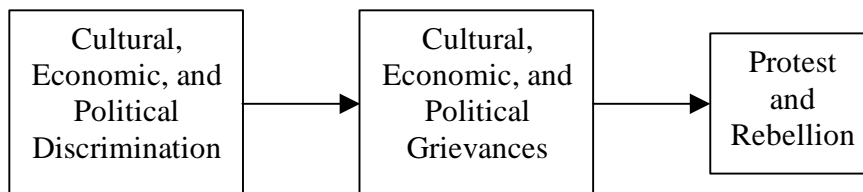
However, in this paper, the focus is on a modified version of the simplified three-step model described above. The primary reason for this is as follows. The small number (13) of Roma groups in the dataset limits the analysis to bivariate statistical techniques as opposed to the multivariate techniques that were available in the original study. The statistical method used in the original analysis of the *Minorities at Risk* dataset to control for multiple factors was multiple regression (Gurr 1993b and Gurr and Moore 1997). However, it is inappropriate to use this statistical method with only thirteen cases. This is because as the number of variables in any test reaches the number of cases, the statistics will technically account for all of the variation but in reality will explain very little. Even if the variables used have nothing to do with the Roma, if enough are used, they will 'statistically' account for the Roma's level of protest, for example. For this reason a model which includes multiple relationships cannot be tested on only thirteen



cases. However, the simple model used here can be tested using means tests and simple correlations.

The only major modification made here of the Phase 1 model is that mobilization will not be tested, due to limitations in the mobilization variables. The mobilization variables used in Phase 1 are based on previous levels of protest and rebellion. While this may be a good indirect measure of mobilization, it can also be argued that past levels of protest and rebellion are in and of themselves good predictors of future levels of protest and rebellion. The mobilization variables available in the Phase 3 dataset are improved – being based on the number of political organizations supported by the group and strength of support for these organizations. However, correlations, not presented here, show that the direct relationship between grievances and protest is stronger without using mobilization as a mediating variable. Thus the model which will actually be tested in this study is a two-step model: discrimination leads to grievances which, in turn, lead to communal protest and rebellion. This model is illustrated in *Figure 2*.

**Figure 2: The Basic Model Used Here**



The causal relationships predicted in this model can be formalized using the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 2: Economic, cultural, and political discrimination against the Roma will cause them to form and express grievances over these issues.*

*Hypothesis 3: Economic, cultural, and political grievances lead to group protest and rebellion by the Roma against the perpetrators of the discrimination which caused the grievances.*

## II. Data and Variables

The cases included in this study include thirteen Roma groups, four from Western Europe and nine from Eastern Europe. Sixty-six non-Roma groups, sixteen from Western Europe and fifty from the former Soviet block are also included in this study. For a full listing of the groups in the study as well as the criteria for determining their inclusion in the study see *Table 6* in Appendix A. All variables are judgemental ordinal variables or composite variables created from several judgemental ordinal variables.

### Discrimination Variables:

There are three variables measuring discrimination used in this study: cultural discrimination; economic discrimination; political discrimination; and political restrictions. All of these variables were collected for the two-year periods from 1990 to 1991, 1992 to 1993, and 1994 to 1995, as well as yearly for 1996, 1997, and 1998.

*Political discrimination:* This variable, ranging from 0 to 18, combines measures of restrictions on: freedom of expression; freedom of movement, place of residence; rights in judicial proceedings; attainment of high office; and other types of restrictions.

*Economic discrimination:* This variable measures government involvement in economic discrimination based on the following scale:

0. none;
1. significant poverty and under-representation in desirable occupations due to historical marginality, neglect, or restrictions but public policies are designed to improve the group's material well-being;
2. significant poverty and under-representation due to historical marginality, neglect, or restrictions and few or no public policies aim at improving the group's material well-being;
3. significant poverty and under-representation due to prevailing social practice by dominant groups and formal public policies toward the group are neutral, or, if positive, inadequate to offset active and widespread discrimination;
4. Public policies (formal exclusion/and/or recurring repression) substantially restrict the group's economic opportunities by contrast with other groups.

*Cultural discrimination:* This variable, ranging from 0 to 24, combines measures of restrictions on: observance of group religion; speaking and publishing in a group's language or dialect; instruction in a group's language; celebration of group holidays, ceremonies, and/or cultural events; dress, appearance, and/or behaviour; marriage and/or family life; organizations that promote the group's cultural interests; and other types of restrictions. Public restrictions that apply to all citizens because they are necessary for the common good, e.g. requirements that families have only one child, or that all children can be vaccinated, are not 'restrictions' even if they violate the cultural norms of the communal group being coded. Lack of public support for group cultural activities is not 'restriction' unless public support is provided to similar activities by other groups.

#### Grievance Variables:

There are three variables measuring grievances: cultural grievances; economic grievances; and political grievances. These variables are all composite variables created by combining several scale variables. All grievance variables were collected for the two-year periods from 1990 to 1991, 1992 to 1993, and 1994 to 1995.

*Political grievances:* This variable, ranging from 0 to 15, measures grievances publicly expressed by group leaders in the following categories: diffuse political grievances – explicit objectives not clear (coded only if more specific categories could not be coded); greater political rights in the group's own community or region; greater participation in politics and decision-making at the central state level; equal civil rights and status; change in unpopular local officials or policies; other types of grievances.

*Economic grievances:* This variable, ranging from 0 to 15, measures grievances publicly expressed by group leaders in the following categories: diffuse economic grievances – explicit objectives not clear (coded only if more specific categories cannot be coded); greater share of public funds and services; greater economic opportunities (better education, access to higher status occupations, resources); improved working conditions, better wages, and/or protective

regulations (if sought specifically for group members); protection of land, jobs, and/or resources being used for the advantage of other groups; other types of economic grievances.

*Cultural grievances:* This variable, ranging from 0 to 15, measures grievances publicly expressed by group leaders in the following categories: freedom of religious belief and practice; promotion of the group's culture and way of life; the right to teach and publish in the group's own language; the right to use the group's own language in dealings with other groups, including government; protection from threats and attacks by other communal groups.

### Protest and Rebellion:

*Protest* is coded each year from 1990 to 1998. It is coded on the following scale:

0. none reported;
1. verbal opposition (public letters, petitions, posters, publications, agitation, etc.);
2. scattered acts of symbolic resistance (e.g. sit-ins, blockage of traffic), sabotage, and/or symbolic destruction of property;
3. political organizing activity on a substantial scale;
4. a few demonstrations, rallies, strikes, and/or riots, total participation less than 10,000;
5. demonstrations, rallies, strikes, and/or riots, total participation estimated between 10,000 and 100,000;
6. demonstrations, rallies, strikes, and/or riots, total participation over 100,000.

*Rebellion* is also coded each year from 1990 to 1998. It is coded on the following scale:

0. none reported;
1. political banditry and/or sporadic terrorism;
2. campaigns of terrorism;
3. local rebellions;
4. small-scale guerrilla activity;
5. intermediate-scale guerrilla activity;
6. large-scale guerrilla activity;
7. protracted civil war, fought by rebel military with base areas.

### III. Data Analysis

The first step in the data analysis is to test *Hypothesis 1* by comparing the mean levels of discrimination for the Roma with the mean levels of these variables for the non-Roma groups in the study. A comparison is also made between the Roma of Eastern Europe and those of Western Europe. This analysis uses the discrimination variables for 1990 to 1991, 1994 to 1995 and 1998 in order to assess discrimination throughout the 1990s. The results of this analysis are set out in the table below.

**Table 1: Mean Levels of Discrimination**

Type of Discrimination	Group	1990 to 1991		1994 to 1995		1998	
		Western Europe	Former Soviet Bloc	Western Europe	Former Soviet Bloc	Western Europe	Former Soviet Bloc
Cultural	Roma	0.000*	0.444**	0.000*	0.444*	0.000*	0.444*
	Others	0.406	1.720	0.469	1.100	0.438	1.910
Economic	Roma	3.000**	3.111**	3.000**	3.111**	3.000**	3.111**
	Others	1.375	0.804	1.375	0.840	1.312	0.956
Political	Roma	0.375	1.056	0.500	1.278	0.500	1.222
	Others	0.938	1.531	0.938	1.061	0.813	1.051

\* = Significance (t-test) of difference between this mean and mean for 'others' in the same category < .05

\*\* = Significance (t-test) of difference between this mean and mean for 'others' in the same category < .001

The results show that *Hypothesis 1*, which predicts that the Roma suffer from disproportionately higher levels of discrimination is true only for economic discrimination. The Roma of both Eastern and Western Europe suffer from levels of economic discrimination that are approximately 2.28 to 3.87 times higher than non-Roma groups in Europe, depending on the time period and part of Europe covered. However, the Roma consistently suffer from less cultural discrimination. Thus, cultural discrimination against Roma in Western Europe has been nonexistent and cultural discrimination against Roma in Eastern Europe has ranged from about 23 to 40 per cent of the mean levels against non-Roma groups, depending on the time period involved. The Roma in Western Europe suffer at levels of approximately 40 to 62 per cent of the levels of political discrimination measured here against non-Roma groups. The levels of political discrimination against the Roma of Eastern Europe are demonstrated here to have risen

throughout the 1990s, reaching levels slightly higher than those against non-Roma groups by 1998.

The results show further that by far the bulk of discrimination against the Roma has been of an economic nature. While the Roma have suffered from some cultural and political discrimination, these forms of discrimination are either lower than that endured by Europe's other ethnic minorities or are not significantly higher. This contradicts the widespread image of Roma being persecuted on all fronts in Europe. Rather, the persecution against the Roma has been predominantly economic. However, the economic persecution is disproportionately acute to the extent that their economic woes overshadow the fact that other types of discrimination against the Roma are not particularly high when compared to discrimination against other European minorities.

Also, the results confirm expectations that discrimination against the Roma is consistently higher in Eastern Europe than it is in Western Europe. This is particularly interesting in that while political and cultural discrimination against non-Roma groups is lower in Western Europe, economic discrimination against non-Roma groups is higher in Western Europe.

**Table 2: Mean Levels of Protest and Rebellion**

Variable	Group	1990		1994		1998	
		Western Europe	Former Soviet Bloc	Western Europe	Former Soviet Bloc	Western Europe	Former Soviet Bloc
Protest	Roma	0.74*	0.89	1.00	0.89*	0.75	0.22
	Others	2.13	1.78	2.31	1.88	1.25	0.82
Rebellion	Roma	0.00*	0.00*	0.00*	0.00**	0.00*	0.00
	Others	0.63	0.46	0.56	1.02	0.44	0.34

\* = Significance (t-test) of difference between this mean and mean for 'others' in the same category < .05

\*\* = Significance (t-test) of difference between this mean and mean for 'others' in the same category < .01

The results in *Table 2* examine the mean levels of protest and rebellion in order to assess whether the level of Roma political activity is out of proportion with that of other ethnic minorities in Europe. The results show that the Roma consistently engage in lower levels of protest than do non-Roma groups and that they engage in no rebellion at all. That the Roma do not rebel is not surprising since rebellion by ethnic minorities is usually linked to the desire for some form of autonomy or independence (Gurr, 1993a; Gurr 2000). The Roma political agenda does not include any such demand.

One possible explanation for the Roma's lower levels of protest activity is that the groups may have difficulty mobilizing for political activity for a variety of reasons. First, the Roma tend to be clannish and these divisions get in the way of coordinated activity. In fact, in many countries the Roma have established large numbers of clan-based political organizations. Second, they have few economic resources. Third, their nomadic lifestyle has inhibited permanent large-scale political organizations. The data supports these conjectures in that they show that in the 1990s the level of Roma political mobilization was less than 39 per cent of that of other European ethnic groups. The mean level of political mobilization by the Roma was 1.38 as compared to 3.56 for other European ethnic groups. The Mobilization variable used here combines measures of the number of political organizations supported by a group with the extent of support for these organizations.

**Table 3: Correlations between Discrimination and Grievances in 1994-1995 for all Roma Groups**

<b>Type of Discrimination</b>	<b>Type of Grievance</b>		
	<b>Cultural</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Political</b>
<b>Cultural</b>	.480*	.381	.290
<b>Economic</b>	.453	.375	.474
<b>Political</b>	.368	.350	.491*

\* = Significance of correlation (p-value) < .1

The second step in the data analysis is to test *Hypothesis 2*. This is done by using simple correlations to test the relationships between discrimination and grievances. The results are

presented in *Table 3* above. The correlations show that there are significant relationships between cultural discrimination and grievances as well as between political discrimination and political grievances. However, economic discrimination has no significant relationship with economic grievances. Thus, the *Minorities at Risk* model's prediction that discrimination leads to grievances is true for the Roma, but only for political and cultural issues and not for economic issues.

One explanation for the fact that economic discrimination and grievances are not significantly linked for the Roma may be that economic discrimination against them is nearly uniform across all thirteen states in which they are included in the *Minorities at Risk* dataset. In fact, in all states except Croatia they suffer from the second highest level of economic discrimination measured by the data, and in Croatia they suffer from the highest. When the value of a variable is nearly uniform, as it is in this case, it will rarely be significantly correlated with any other variable. However, the Roma express varying levels of economic grievances from state to state. In five countries they express no grievances, in four they express high levels of grievances and in four they express mid-level economic grievances. High-level economic grievances are defined here as economic grievances variables coded as four or above. For all Roma groups which express high-level economic grievances, this variable is coded as four. Mid-level economic grievances are defined here as ranging between one and three. Thus, while economic discrimination against the Roma is nearly uniform, the grievances they express over this discrimination varies from state to state. Given this, it must be something other than economic discrimination which causes Roma to express economic grievances.

**Table 4: Correlations between Types of Grievances in 1994-1995 for all Roma Groups**

Type of Grievance	Type of Grievance	
	Cultural	Political
Cultural	--	.738*
Economic	.805**	.736*

\* = Significance of correlation (p-value) < .01

\*\* = Significance of correlation (p-value) < .001



An examination of the correlations between economic, political, and cultural grievances, as shown in *Table 4*, provides a better understanding of how the Roma form grievances. All three types of grievances are highly correlated with each other. This means that when a Roma group expresses one form of grievance, they are highly likely to express the others. In other words, for the Roma, expressing grievances tends to be an all or nothing proposition. Thus, the variation in economic grievances is linked to whether the Roma are expressing political and cultural grievances rather than to economic discrimination.

The final step in the data analysis was to test the relationship between grievances and the level of protest. This test was not carried out for rebellion because the Roma did not engage in any rebellious activities that would be included in the *Minorities at Risk* rebellion variable. The results of these correlations are presented in *Table 5*.

**Table 5: Correlations between Grievances in 1994-1995 and Protest in 1994 through 1996 for All Roma**

Type of Grievance	Protest in		
	1994	1995	1996
<b>Cultural</b>	.544*	.337	.337
<b>Economic</b>	.619*	.604*	.670*
<b>Political</b>	.697*	.558*	.409

\* = Significance of correlation (p-value) < .1

\*\* = Significance of correlation (p-value) < .01

The correlations show strong relationships between all three grievance variables and the levels of protest from 1994 to 1996. The correlation between economic grievances and the level of protest is especially strong. In addition, the fact that the direct correlations between the discrimination variables and the level of protest (in tests not presented here) are weak and insignificant is a further indication of the accuracy of the multi-step model used here.

#### **IV. Discussion**

The data analysis provides considerable support for the multi-step model illustrated in *Figure 2*, which argues that discrimination leads to grievance formation which, in turn leads to communal protest. However, the relationships found here are not that simple. A more accurate picture of the results is depicted in *Figure 3*, Appendix B. As seen in *Figure 3*, there is a direct relationship between cultural discrimination and cultural grievances as well as between political discrimination and political grievances. However, economic discrimination, while present, does not directly lead to economic grievances. Rather, economic grievances surface only when cultural and/or political grievances are already present. In fact, the general pattern is that if one type of grievance is expressed so are the others. Finally, all three types of grievances lead to communal protest.

Interestingly, the sum of economic grievances, which has no direct relationship to any form of discrimination, is the most important variable in predicting the level of communal protest among the Roma. Perhaps this is not because the economic grievances themselves are the sole direct cause of communal protest among the Roma but rather because economic grievances do not surface among the Roma unless political and cultural grievances reach sufficient levels. That is, the presence of openly expressed economic grievances among the Roma is an indicator that the general level of discontent is at a high level. Thus, if the Roma openly express economic grievances, this means that their discontent has probably already reached the level necessary to motivate communal protest.

Another interesting finding is that the Roma engage in no rebellion, despite suffering from high levels of discrimination. This is probably because ethnic minorities tend to rebel only when they desire some form of autonomy or independence from the state in which they live. Studies have found that such desires are rarely expressed unless the group has had some form of autonomy in the past, which is not the case with the Roma (Gurr 1993a; Gurr 2000).

## **V. Conclusion**

The findings here show that while, in general, the Roma conform to the conflict patterns of other ethnic minorities, they differ in many specifics. The most interesting of these is that economic grievances, which are most strongly associated with protest among the Roma, are apparently precipitated less by direct economic discrimination than by grievances over political and social issues. These other types of grievances apparently act as catalysts for the expression of economic grievances. Also, no Roma group in Europe engaged in rebellion between 1990 and 1998 despite high levels of discrimination.

These findings are significant for two major reasons. First, they provide insights into the nature of Roma communal conflict behaviour that probably would not have been uncovered by any method other than a large-n cross-sectional analysis. That economic discrimination has no direct connection with grievances expressed over that discrimination is highly counter-intuitive. That non-economic discrimination against the Roma is generally lower than similar discrimination against Europe's non-Roma minorities also runs against common assumptions. This indicates that the empirical study of the Roma can provide fruitful results and that further efforts should be made at such research. In addition, further evidence has been provided to demonstrate that while there are similarities in conflict behaviour across ethnic minorities, there are also significant variations.

**Acknowledgements**

The author would like to thank Ted R. Gurr and the staff of the *Minorities at Risk* Project without whom this study would not have been possible. He would also like to thank Betty Brown for her advice and criticism when this study was in its early stages. All remaining errors of fact or interpretation are the author's alone. All statistics in this study were performed using SPSS 9.0 for Windows.

## **APPENDIX A: Listing of Groups in Study**

The *Minorities at Risk* dataset contains data on 275 ethnic minorities who are considered to be ‘at risk’ by the project based on one or more of the following criteria: the group is subject to discrimination at present; the group is disadvantaged because of the results of past discrimination; the group is an advantaged minority that is being challenged by other groups; and/or the group (in whole or in part) supports one or more political organizations that advocates greater group rights, privileges or autonomy. These groups must also constitute at least 100,000 members of one per cent of the country in which they reside to be included in the dataset.

This study focuses only on Europe and includes twenty groups from Western Europe, including four Roma groups and fifty-nine groups from the former Soviet Bloc, including nine Roma groups. Groups from other regions of the world, including other Western democracies, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, have not been included in this study because there are no Roma groups that are included in the project from these regions.

Table 6 on the following pages is a listing of all groups included in this analysis; Roma groups are in italics.

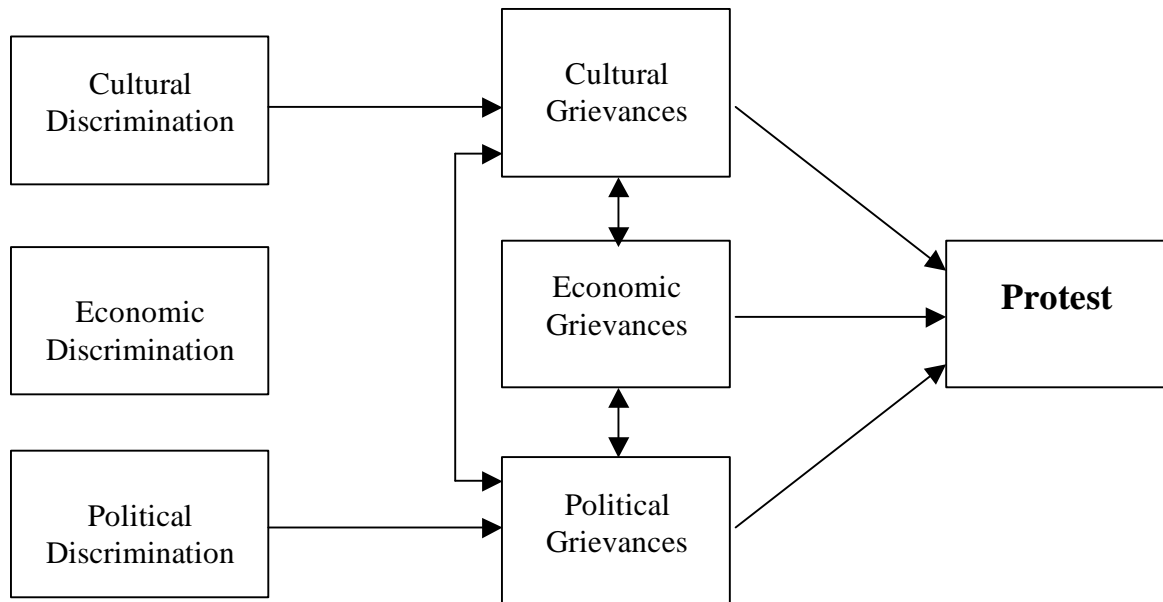
**Table 6: Listing of Groups in Study**[\* Group and country population figures are taken from *Minorities at Risk* estimates]

<b>Country</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Group Pop. in 1998 (in 1000s)*</b>	<b>Country Pop. in 1998 (in 1000s)*</b>
Albania	Greeks	117	3,331
Azerbaijan	Armenians	181	7,856
Azerbaijan	Lezgins	196	7,856
Azerbaijan	Russians	1,964	7,856
Belarus	Poles	427	10,409
Belarus	Russians	1,374	10,409
Bosnia	Croats	740	3,366
Bosnia	Muslims	1,279	3,366
Bosnia	Serbs	1,346	3,366
<i>Bulgaria</i>	<i>Roma</i>	733	8,240
Bulgaria	Turks	700	8,240
<i>Croatia</i>	<i>Roma</i>	35	4,872
Croatia	Serbs	247	4,872
<i>Czech Rep.</i>	<i>Roma</i>	267	10,286
Czech Rep.	Slovaks	309	10,286
Estonia	Russians	408	1,421
France	Basques	259	58,805
France	Corsicans	365	58,805
France	Muslims	2,235	58,805
<i>France</i>	<i>Roma</i>	312	58,805
Georgia	Abkhazians	89	5,109
Georgia	Adzhars	296	5,109
Georgia	Ossetians	163	5,109
Georgia	Russians	245	5,109
Germany	Turks	1,970	82,079
Greece	Muslims	128	10,662
<i>Greece</i>	<i>Roma</i>	181	10,662
<i>Hungary</i>	<i>Roma</i>	572	10,208
<i>Italy</i>	<i>Roma</i>	99	56,783
Italy	Sardinians	1,647	56,783
Italy	South Tyroleans	290	56,783
Kazakhstan	Germans	522	16,847
Kazakhstan	Russians	5,846	16,847
Kyrgyzstan	Russians	814	4,522
Kyrgyzstan	Uzbeks	583	4,522
Latvia	Russians	821	2,385
Lithuania	Poles	252	3,600
Lithuania	Russians	313	3,600

<b>Country</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Group Pop. in 1998 (in 1000s)*</b>	<b>Country Pop. in 1998 (in 1000s)*</b>
Macedonia	Albanians	460	2,009
<i>Macedonia</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>241</i>	<i>2,009</i>
Macedonia	Serbs	48	2,009
Moldova	Gagauz	156	4,458
Moldova	Slavs	1,195	4,458
Nordic Countries	Sami	65	18,456
Romania	Magyars	1,993	22,396
<i>Romania</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>2,083</i>	<i>22,396</i>
Russia	Avars	543	146,881
Russia	Buryat	411	146,881
Russia	Chechens	896	146,881
Russia	Ingush	235	146,881
Russia	Karachay	147	146,881
Russia	Kumyks	250	146,881
Russia	Lezgins	2,497	146,881
<i>Russia</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>294</i>	<i>146,881</i>
Russia	Tatars	5,581	146,881
Russia	Tuvinians	206	146,881
Russia	Yakut	382	146,881
Slovakia	Hungarians	582	5,393
<i>Slovakia</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>502</i>	<i>5,393</i>
Spain	Basques	2,113	39,134
Spain	Catalans	6,261	39,134
<i>Spain</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>744</i>	<i>39,134</i>
Switzerland	Foreign Workers	1,408	7,260
Switzerland	Jurassians	160	7,260
Tajikistan	Russians	210	6,020
Turkmenistan	Russians	288	4,298
Ukraine	Crimean Russians	1,654	50,125
Ukraine	Crimean Tatars	251	50,125
Ukraine	Russians	11,028	50,125
United Kingdom	Afro-Caribbeans	1,179	58,970
United Kingdom	Asians	1,651	58,970
United Kingdom	N. Ireland Catholics	702	58,970
United Kingdom	Scots	5,661	58,970
Uzbekistan	Russians	1,308	23,784
Yugoslavia	Croats	134	10,526
Yugoslavia	Hungarians	448	10,526
Yugoslavia	Kosovo Albanians	1,569	10,526
<i>Yugoslavia</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>421</i>	<i>10,526</i>
Yugoslavia	Sandzak Muslims	206	10,526

## APPENDIX B: Figure 3

Figure 3: The relationship between discrimination, grievances and protest for the Roma





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### **Biographical Note**

Jonathan Fox received his Ph.D. in Government and Politics from the University of Maryland in 1997. His main research interests include the influence of religion on ethnic conflict, the civilizations debate, and issues of the separation of religion and state. His publications include *Ethnoreligious Conflict in the Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (forthcoming from Lexington Books) and recent and forthcoming articles in the *British Journal of Political Science*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *International Studies Review*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *Middle East Quarterly*, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, *Nations and Nationalism*, and *Terrorism and Political Violence*.